

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. 1. A method for automating an online sweepstakes, comprising the steps of:
 2. (a) providing to a user on a computer network a design interface for designing a sweepstakes form, the design interface associated with functionality for altering the appearance of the sweepstakes form based upon input from the user;
 3. (b) receiving the input from the user via the computer network for altering the appearance of the sweepstakes form; and
 4. (c) generating electronically a revised sweepstakes form based upon the input from the user.
5. 2. The method according to claim 1, wherein the design interface includes a Web page resembling the sweepstakes form, the Web page associated with an editing button, the editing button linking to the functionality for altering the appearance of the sweepstakes form.
6. 3. The method according to claim 2, wherein the functionality for altering the appearance of the sweepstakes form includes the substep of:
 7. (d) prompting the user via the computer network to specify an attribute of the sweepstakes form.
8. 4. The method according to claim 3, wherein the attribute of the sweepstakes form includes at least one of a question to be presented to the entrant on the sweepstakes form, a maximum permissible length of an entrant response in characters, whether a question to be presented to an entrant begins on a new line in the sweepstakes form, an instruction field associated with a question, and a type of question to be presented to the entrant.
9. 5. The method according to claim 1, further comprising the steps of:
 10. (d) receiving an indication from the user relating to sweepstakes parameters; and
 11. (e) generating electronically a legal rule based upon the indication received from the user.

1 6. The method according to claim 1, further comprising the steps of:
2 (d) providing the user with a winner-drawing interface for randomly selecting winners
3 of the online sweepstakes.

1 7. A computer arrangement for automating an online sweepstakes, comprising:
2 a communication device; and
3 a processor, the processor:
4 providing to a user via the communication device a design interface for
5 designing a sweepstakes form, the design interface associated with functionality for
6 altering the appearance of the sweepstakes form based upon input from the user,
7 receiving the input from the user via the communication device for altering
8 the appearance of the sweepstakes form, and
9 generating a revised sweepstakes form based upon the input from the user.

1 8. The computer arrangement according to claim 7, wherein the design interface includes a
2 Web page resembling the sweepstakes form, the Web page associated with an editing
3 button, the editing button linking to the functionality for altering the appearance of the
4 sweepstakes form.

1 9. The computer arrangement according to claim 8, wherein the processor prompts the user
2 via the communication device to specify an attribute of the sweepstakes form.

1 10. The computer arrangement according to claim 9, wherein the attribute of the sweepstakes
2 form includes at least one of a question to be presented to the entrant on the sweepstakes
3 form, a maximum permissible length of an entrant response in characters, whether a
4 question to be presented to an entrant begins on a new line in the sweepstakes form, an
5 instruction field associated with a question, and a type of question to be presented to the
6 entrant.

1 11. The computer arrangement according to claim 7,
2 wherein the processor receives via the communication device an indication from
3 the user relating to sweepstakes parameters, and
4 wherein the processor generates a legal rule based upon the indication received
5 from the user.

1 12. The computer arrangement according to claim 7, wherein the processor provides the user
2 with a winner-drawing interface for randomly selecting winners of the online sweepstakes.

1 13. A method for integrating marketing tools with an online sweepstakes over a computer
2 network, comprising the steps of:
3 (a) receiving contact information from an online sweepstakes entrant via an online
4 entry form associated with the online sweepstakes; and
5 (b) providing a communication interface to a marketer, the communication interface
6 using the contact information to allow the marketer to communicate with the
7 online sweepstakes entrant over the computer network.

1 14. The method according to claim 13,
2 wherein the contact information includes an email address, and
3 wherein the marketer communicates with the online sweepstakes entrant via email.

1 15. The method according to claim 14, wherein the communication interface allows the
2 marketer to track a response by the online sweepstakes entrant to an email message sent to
3 the online sweepstakes entrant by the marketer.

1 16. A computer arrangement for integrating marketing tools with an online sweepstakes over a
2 computer network, comprising:
3 a communication device; and
4 a processor, the processor:
5 receiving contact information via the communication device from an online
6 sweepstakes entrant via an online entry form associated with the online
7 sweepstakes, and
8 providing a communication interface to a marketer via the communication
9 device, the communication interface using the contact information to allow the
10 marketer to communicate with the online sweepstakes entrant over the computer
11 network.

1 17. The computer arrangement according to claim 16,
2 wherein the contact information includes an email address, and
3 wherein the marketer communicates with the online sweepstakes entrant via email.

1 18. The computer arrangement according to claim 17, wherein the communication interface
2 allows the marketer to track email response of the online sweepstakes entrant via the
3 computer network.

1 19. A method for conducting an online sweepstakes over a computer network, comprising the
2 steps of:

3 (a) providing to a user on a computer network a design interface for designing a
4 sweepstakes form, the design interface associated with functionality for altering the
5 appearance of the sweepstakes form based upon input from the user;

6 (b) receiving the input from the user via the computer network for altering the
7 appearance of the sweepstakes form;

8 (c) generating electronically a revised sweepstakes form based upon the input from the
9 user;

10 (d) receiving contact information from an online sweepstakes entrant via an online
11 entry form associated with the online sweepstakes; and

12 (e) providing a communication interface to the user, the communication interface
13 using the contact information to allow the user to communicate with the online
14 sweepstakes entrant over the computer network.

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16 20. The method according to claim 19, wherein the design interface includes a Web page
17 resembling the sweepstakes form, the Web page associated with an editing button, the
18 editing button linking to the functionality for altering the appearance of the sweepstakes
19 form.

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21 21. The method according to claim 20, wherein the functionality for altering the appearance of
22 the sweepstakes form includes the substep of:

23 (f) prompting the user via the computer network to specify an attribute of the
24 sweepstakes form.

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26 22. The method according to claim 21, wherein the attribute of the sweepstakes form includes
27 at least one of a question to be presented to the entrant on the sweepstakes form, a
28 maximum permissible length of an entrant response in characters, whether a question to be
29 presented to an entrant begins on a new line in the sweepstakes form, an instruction field
30 associated with a question, and a type of question to be presented to the entrant.

1 23. The method according to claim 19, further comprising the steps of:
2 (f) receiving an indication from the user relating to sweepstakes parameters; and
3 (g) generating electronically a legal rule based upon the indication received from the
4 user.

1 24. The method according to claim 19, further comprising the steps of:
2 (f) providing the user with a winner-drawing interface for randomly selecting winners
3 of the online sweepstakes.

1 25. The method according to claim 19,
2 wherein the contact information includes an email address, and
3 wherein the marketer communicates with the online sweepstakes entrant via email.

1 26. The method according to claim 25, wherein the communication interface allows the
2 marketer to track a response by the online sweepstakes entrant to an email message sent to
3 the online sweepstakes entrant by the marketer.

1 27. A computer arrangement for conducting an online sweepstakes over a computer network,
2 comprising:
3 a communication device; and
4 a processor, the processor:
5 providing to a user via the communication device a design interface for
6 designing a sweepstakes form, the design interface associated with functionality for
7 altering the appearance of the sweepstakes form based upon input from the user,
8 receiving the input from the user via the communication device for altering
9 the appearance of the sweepstakes form,
10 generating a revised sweepstakes form based upon the input from the user,
11 receiving contact information via the communication device from an online
12 sweepstakes entrant via an online entry form associated with the online
13 sweepstakes, and
14 providing a communication interface to the user via the communication
15 device, the communication interface using the contact information to allow the user
16 to communicate with the online sweepstakes entrant over the computer network.

1 28. The computer arrangement according to claim 27, wherein the design interface includes a
2 Web page resembling the sweepstakes form, the Web page associated with an editing
3 button, the editing button linking to the functionality for altering the appearance of the
4 sweepstakes form.

1 29. The computer arrangement according to claim 28, wherein the processor prompts the user
2 via the communication device to specify an attribute of the sweepstakes form.

1 30. The computer arrangement according to claim 29, wherein the attribute of the sweepstakes
2 form includes at least one of a question to be presented to the entrant on the sweepstakes
3 form, a maximum permissible length of an entrant response in characters, whether a
4 question to be presented to an entrant begins on a new line in the sweepstakes form, an
5 instruction field associated with a question, and a type of question to be presented to the
6 entrant.

1 31. The computer arrangement according to claim 27,
2 wherein the processor receives via the communication device an indication from
3 the user relating to sweepstakes parameters, and
4 wherein the processor generates a legal rule based upon the indication received
5 from the user.

1 32. The computer arrangement according to claim 27, wherein the processor provides the user
2 with a winner-drawing interface for randomly selecting winners of the online sweepstakes.

1 33. The computer arrangement according to claim 27,
2 wherein the contact information includes an email address, and
3 wherein the user communicates with the online sweepstakes entrant via email.

1 34. The computer arrangement according to claim 33, wherein the communication interface
2 allows the marketer to track a response by the online sweepstakes entrant to an email
3 message sent to the online sweepstakes entrant by the marketer.

1 35. A machine-readable medium having stored thereon a plurality of executable instructions
2 for automating an online sweepstakes, the plurality of instructions comprising instructions
3 to:
4 (a) providing to a user on a computer network an interface for designing a sweepstakes
5 form, the interface associated with functionality for altering the appearance of the
6 sweepstakes form based upon input from the user;
7 (b) receiving the input from the user via the computer network for altering the
8 appearance of the sweepstakes form; and
9 (c) generating electronically a revised sweepstakes form based upon the input from the
10 user.

1 36. A machine-readable medium having stored thereon a plurality of executable instructions
2 for integrating marketing tools with an online sweepstakes over a computer network, the
3 plurality of instructions comprising instructions to:
4 (a) receiving contact information from an online sweepstakes entrant via an online
5 entry form associated with the online sweepstakes; and
6 (b) providing a communication interface to a marketer, the communication interface
7 using the contact information to allow the marketer to communicate with the
8 online sweepstakes entrant over the computer network.

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1 37. A machine-readable medium having stored thereon a plurality of executable instructions
2 for conducting an online sweepstakes over a computer network, the plurality of
3 instructions comprising instructions to:
4 (a) providing to a user on a computer network a design interface for designing a
5 sweepstakes form, the design interface associated with functionality for altering the
6 appearance of the sweepstakes form based upon input from the user;
7 (b) receiving the input from the user via the computer network for altering the
8 appearance of the sweepstakes form;
9 (c) generating electronically a revised sweepstakes form based upon the input from the
10 user;
11 (d) receiving contact information from an online sweepstakes entrant via an online
12 entry form associated with the online sweepstakes; and
13 (e) providing a communication interface to the user, the communication interface
14 using the contact information to allow the user to communicate with the online
15 sweepstakes entrant over the computer network.